

REMARKS

The present application was filed on November 7, 2001 and is a division of U.S. Patent No. 6,366,888, filed March 29, 1999. Only claims 14-18 and 41-45 are currently pending in the application. The remainder of the claims were canceled upon the formation of this application. Claims 14 and 41 are the independent claims.

It is initially noted that the Examiner both rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and allows claim 15 (if it were rewritten in independent form). Applicants believe this is a typographical error and will proceed in these remarks with the assumption that claim 15 would be in condition for allowance if rewritten in independent form.

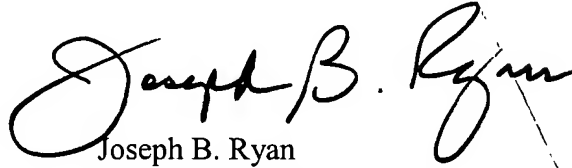
In this Office Action, claims 14, 16-18, 41 and 43-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,246,345 to Davidson et al. (hereinafter "Davidson"). Furthermore, the abstract of the application is objected to because it is the same as the parent application (U.S. Patent 6,366,888) and has not been modified for the instant application. Claims 18 and 45 are objected to based on minor informalities. Finally, claims 15 and 45 are indicated as containing allowable subject matter, but are objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims.

With regard to the abstract, Applicants have amended the abstract in a manner that is believed to address the concerns raised by the Examiner. With respect to the objections to claims 15 and 45, Applicants have amended these claims such that the acronym "PAC" is explicitly spelled out in the claims.

Applicants traverse the §102(e) rejections of claims 14, 16-18, 41 and 43-45 as being anticipated by Davidson. The Davidson reference claims priority to a provisional application with a filing date of April 16, 1999. In comparison, the instant divisional application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §120 to a parent application with a filing date of March 29, 1999. Davidson, therefore, does not have an effective filing date prior to the present application and, accordingly, is not prior art under §102(e).

In view of the above, Applicants believe that claims 14-18 and 41-45 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph B. Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" and last name "Ryan" clearly legible. The middle initial "B." is also present.

Date: November 8, 2004

Joseph B. Ryan
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 37,922
Ryan, Mason & Lewis, LLP
90 Forest Avenue
Locust Valley, NY 11560
(516) 759-7517